(iii) *UK:*

At the invitation of his British counterpart, Prime Minister visited the UK from 12-13 November for discussions with Prime Minister Tony Blair on the evolving situation in Afghanistan. The two Prime Ministers concurred on the urgency of ensuring a post-conflict political structure in Afghanistan before the military campaign ends and on the need for Afghanistan's reconstruction. They shared the view that the current international coalition against terrorism could not confine itself to dismantling the Al Qaeda network alone. Prime Minister emphasized that the global war against terrorism must also takcle all its sponsors who finance, train, equip and harbour terrorists. Appreciation was conveyed to the UK for proscription of six terrorist organizations earlier this year, under their Terrorism Act 2000. The British side shared information on the additional legislative measures to be introduced in their Parliament to curb international terrorism.

No agreements/documents/MoUs were signed during the visit.

Safeguarding interests of Indian Fishermen

513. SHRI C.P. THIRUN AVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards recent decision of the Indian Ocean Rim countries regarding penalties against small scale fish workers for illegal fishing;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government propose to initiate amendments in the Convention on the Laws of Sea and Declaration of Inclusive Economic Zone;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the other measures to be undertaken to protect rights of the fish workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The meeting of the Working Group on Fisheries of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) was held in Muscat, Oman, on September 15-16, 2001. The report of the meeting has not yet been circulated to the IOR-ARC member States by the IOR-ARC Secretariat. Even after the report is circulated, it is to be approved by the Council of Ministers of the IOR-ARC, before its recomendations can be taken as constituting any decision on the part of the member States. The next meeting of

the Council of Ministers is likely to be held in Colombo in the first quarter of 2003.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Construction of Chancery-cum-Embassy Residences

514. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has not finalized the proposal for construction of Chancery-cum-Embassy residences etc. at Beijing, Doha, Muscat and Gaborone on the plots acquired for the purpose.

(b) whether an avoidable expenditure of Rs. 26.27 crore on hiring of accommodation has been incurred till 1999-2000;

(c) if so, the reasons for delay in the decision; and

(d) the steps being taken to expedite the decision?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a), (c) and (d) Yes Sir, the Chancery-cum-Embassy residence projects at Beijing, Doha, Muscat and Gaborone, on the plots of land acquired by the Government, are at advanced stages of processing. Financial approvals have been obtained for undertaking the construction work in Doha and Gaborone. The process of finalisation of conceptual layout plans for the Chancery project in Beijing and Embassy complex project in Muscat is nearing completion.

The construction projects are undertaken in a phased manner keeping in view the economic viability and the comparative rental structure and accordingly a number of projects had been undertaken in other countries based on these criteria. The projects in Beijing, Doha, Gaborone and Muscat have now been identified for early implementation and are at final stages of processing as mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

(b) Yes, Sir, the total payment on rental in Beijing, Doha, Muscat and Gaborone between 1992-93 and 1999-2000 was Rs. 26.27 crores. It may also be mentioned that the combined annual rental liability in these countries is Rs. 4.64 crores, as against the total annual rental liability of Rs. 142.16 crores. The construction cost has been estimated at Rs. 93 crores.